Mental Health
False Standards

Education
For War or Peace?

The Missionary Command
Its Rediscovery

The Atomic Age
And False Complacency

Free India
Current Atmosphere

Voices
Correspondence
Reviews
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Contents

Editorials

Peace of Mind................................................. 203
Are We Asking For It?........................................ 204
Education During the Cold War.............................. 205

Articles

The Rediscovery of the Missionary Task..................... Johan H. Bavinck 206
We and Our Youth in the Atomic Age....................... Clifford Vander Ark 211

The Voice of Our Readers

Our Own Grub Street........................................... 217
Reformed International Council of Missions................. 217

From Our Correspondents

From South India............................................... 218
Hungarian Letter................................................ 219
International Calvinistic Conference at Amsterdam........ 220

Book Reviews

Calvin’s Works: Centennial Republication.................. 221
The Epistle to the Romans....................................... 221
The Book of Isaiah.............................................. 222
The Epistle to the Hebrews..................................... 223
The Epistles to the Corinthians............................... 224

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Peace of Mind

For a writer there is nothing so sweet as to discover that he is read. I had this exhilarating experience a few months ago when I composed some paragraphs on psychosomatic medicine. But it is joy unbounded to see one’s own words stimulate a reader to composition on the same theme. Dr. L. De Wind’s carefully constructed exposition enriched the pages of our March issue. Our paper very much needs the instruction and guidance which our medical men from time to time give it. Their specialty fairly bristles with questions that reach out into many aspects of our common life. The urge toward socialized medicine springs not only from a desire to distribute the cost of medical services but as well from the feeling that our modern science of medicine has so much to contribute to our well-being that it should be common property, common as the air we breathe and the water we drink.

We live in an age of popularization. The laboratory study of yesterday becomes the news of today. To be sure, simplification leads to a measure of distortion. And yet one must admit that our better lay magazines convey a surprisingly accurate picture of the newer scientific concepts. Harper’s in “The Universe and Dr. Einstein” is currently busy with a series of three articles which will give a portrait of the universe as it appears in the light of modern cosmological theory. Surely it is a wholesome obligation for both the writer and his subject that his ideas be made intelligible to the non-technical reader. A good deal of chaff gets sifted out in the process. One shudders to think what would happen to theology if theologians did not have to preach sermons. The layman in the pew keeps our thinking straight!

Yet there is reason to feel that the popularization of psychosomatic medicine and psychology generally has not been an unmixed blessing. It is a step forward when people begin to realize that their emotions have something to do with their physical health but there is a real danger that they will not probe the matter far enough. Man, being what he is, is only too ready to hang the blame for his troubles on the wrong peg. Formerly we said that our miseries stemmed from our environment. Our political, social, economic and family circumstances accounted for our ills. Now we are taught that not these things but our attitude towards them is the real villain. And so we have set to work on the inner house of our emotions. We are instructed to keep on reminding ourselves that we must never lose sight of the distinction between the issue and the attitude. However bad may be the outer circumstances of our life we must permit no alarm to be sounded in the citadel within us. We control our feelings, we lull our consciences to sleep and but for the grace of God, we shall like the rich man, open our eyes in hell.

There is one aspect of Freud’s teaching which always impresses me and that is that he was no optimist about man and his troubles. He consistently restrained the enthusiasm of some of his followers who tended to look upon psycho-analytical therapeutics as a cure-all. He knew that man’s troubles lie very, very deep and are amenable to no easy procedures of treatment. In fact, knowing not the gift of God, he remained throughout his long life profoundly skeptical of man’s possibility of happiness. There is this to be said in favor of his thinking: his pessimism is at least a pre-condition of something better. The same cannot be said of the man who does not probe beyond his emotional life.

Where do people take their troubles? They sit in the doctor’s consultation room, not in the pastor’s study. They achieve a measure of health and inner peace as they gain insight into the relation between their ill-health and their distorted and chaotic emotions and thinking. And it is exactly at this point that they are in real peril. A certain lessening of the inner tension with a resultant increase in happiness blinds them to the true gravity of their situation. The ancient poet Homer, cutting through an infinity of debate, said simply, “All men need God.” Man stops short of seeing his real need, his need of God which lies back of all his other needs. St. Augustine, the first Christian psychologist, struck right to the core of our problem with his, “Our souls find no rest until they rest in Thee.”

The American public has been over-sold on psychological lore. Interest in how we feel and how in consequence we shall act has become a fad. Many want the newer knowledge in order that they may be able to manipulate their fellow-man for their own ends. The market is flooded with books of the sort How To Win Friends and Influence People. For genuine interest in and concern for the welfare of others is substituted the unworthy aim of using people to one’s own advantage. The evil results of this are seen in business. A good deal of advertising has lost all relation to the product represented. Much of it is silly or lascivious or down-right misleading. Even worthwhile religious and philan-
thropic causes are making use of such methods. The spread of the Gospel itself is just another "sales job" and the experts are called in "to put the thing over." We Christian people must be on our guard lest we employ methods unworthy of the great causes which we seek to promote.

Perhaps more serious than the foregoing is the substitution of psychological insight and analysis for religion. The fast-selling Peace of Mind and the like are rapidly becoming substitutes for the peace of God which the Bible teaches. How Never To Be Tired will not point you to the one who said, "Come unto me and I will give you rest." On Being A Real Person by Fosdick holds forth the hope of attaining unto the good life without the person of the Christ who died for us. I certainly would not want to be understood as denying that these books are of any value at all. They contain much wholesome, practical advice from which most of us could profit. Their danger is that they set up a false standard concerning our true well-being. They imply that if we are happy, contented and adjusted to our environment, if we are avoiding or gaining control over neurotic patterns of behavior and as a result are free from the bodily disturbances which follow unhealthy emotions we are indeed living the good life. The matter is further confounded by the fact that this ideal of life is the sum and substance of the preaching in many of the pulpits of the Christian church today. This is precisely what Christianity means for many of our citizens who still attend the services of the churches.

So there is a real challenge in all of this for the Christian doctor who is alert to the newer procedures of psychosomatic medicine. And back of the doctor stand the schools where he must get his education. Straight thinking here is primarily the business of the colleges, (rather than the medical schools), where his mind must be molded into the Christian way of thinking about man. It is here that his mind comes to maturity and his fundamental outlook on life is fixed. The whole of the college curriculum is relevant to this task but the departments of Bible, Psychology and Philosophy bear a most particular responsibility.

W. T. R.

Are We Asking For It?

MINOUS clouds are rising on the horizon. A storm of catastrophic proportions may break down upon this earth any moment. That is the fear that disturbs the promise of peace throughout the world. And every nation washes its hands in innocence with the declaration that it must protect itself from aggressors that threaten to rob it of its freedom. In fact of no nation can it be said "Blessed are the peacemakers," and that is undoubtedly due to the fact that in a real sense they "are not the sons of God."

As the various elements that brought on World War II are being brought to light by probing historians, it becomes increasingly evident that the American hands are not nearly as clean as some of us were led to believe. Historian Charles Beard in a recently published volume has argued that we were led into the war, which might have been avoided, by our own leaders whom we trusted so completely. It is quite probable that he has overstated his case. Yet the evidences are sufficient for the conclusion that in the matter of making charters and agreements, and then forthwith breaking them, America was not an innocent bystander. We have done our share in stimulating the war spirit, and in adopting and executing provocative war measures. We had urged on "the hounds of battle." Perhaps we were justified. Perhaps we had no other recourse. But one wonders in the light of the materials on whose part in the world wide holocaust that are being published whether we justifiably can declare that we were innocent peacemakers irresistibly drawn into the fray and whether we did not for reasons that are not always justifiable surrender our role as champions of "good will among nations."

At any rate it is generally conceded that the nations have hated, impoverished and killed each other in vain. But it need not be entirely in vain unless we permit this part of history to slip on into the fields of oblivion unrelied of the precious lessons that it had and has in store for us. That is at least something that we may be able to salvage from the wreckage. One of the lessons is this: Don't be provocative. Somewhere one may read, "Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath." We might well paraphrase it to read, "Nations, provoke not your fellow-nations to wrath."

What is our score in this matter? We are storing or at least leaving the impression that we are storing large stocks of atom bombs. We are building air bases in every strategic position where it is permitted. We have set aside 11,000,000 dollars for military purposes. We are making plans for nation-wide conscription and for a Universal Military Training program. Our president has in no uncertain terms informed the world who the nation is against whose aggression all this is directed. In spite of the persistent protests of the laboring men, farmers, educators, and church men, the militarists are continuing to forge a fighting nation. In our international relationships, we must be sure that we are right, honest, firm and fully prepared to meet every international exigency. But we do not have to swagger before those whom we hold to be our enemy, stripped to waist, flexing our bulging muscles, and saying in effect, "Come on, let's fight."

H. S.

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Education During the Cold War

It was just six years ago last March that the President called for a meeting of American college and university leaders in Baltimore. More than a thousand responded. Militarists appeared before them. Many of the educators felt that they were treated like puppets who had to dance as the strings were being pulled. They grumbled about it and a few feebly resisted. But after all it was war. And all the resources of the country had to be placed at the feet of the warriors. All the educational policies, objectives and methods that have been developed throughout the ages were being discarded. Courses were changed. Methods of teaching were regarded as inadequate. Professors of philosophy were compelled to teach elementary mathematics. Doctors in cultural subjects were assigned teaching positions in machine shops and so on ad nauseam. It was effective in training human robots. The educands were not trained to be free agents in a democracy, but to do effectively a bit of technical work in a vast machine where men were but cogs and the brass hats were at the levers. Many educators hailed such educational methods at the time because it got what they chose to call results. But practically all the military educational novelties have been discarded by this time as unfit for peace-time training.

However, the whole pattern suggests that America's educational institutions were in the main ready to surrender anything and everything in the interest of promoting war. Strange though it may seem, there is nothing comparable to that sort of educational effort to prepare the people for peacetime. And peace time is certainly as important as war time for it is time in which wars are made. We are now living in peace, but there is a sinister cold war being waged, which indirectly affects the matter of world peace. One may well ask whether it would not be the part of wisdom and of sanctified common sense to educate as vigorously during this cold war as during the fighting war. Why is it that the war maker can utilize the resources of a nation to promote his bloody, though necessary, work, whereas the peace-maker appears as helplessness personified? To promote peace requires just as much, if not more, vigorous and concerted action as does the promotion of war. Yet the world of American education sits back looking at the ideologies that may once again wreck the world, forgetting that wrong ideas can be much better fought with right ideas than with atom bombs and other military paraphernalia.

Lest the reader may get an erroneous impression, let me add that there are some educational institutions that are doing something about it, but their attempts are inadequate both from the point of view of the quality and the quantity of their efforts. In this cold war the educational leaders have succeeded in adding a course or two to promote world understanding and peace. They aim to prepare the youth "to understand and to defend ideals which undergird Western Civilization." "They would give them an understanding of the peoples of other lands, of the problems involved in making this ONE WORLD, and of inspiring in them a sense of responsibility that should be attached to being a citizen of that nation which the democracies of the world look to for leadership." They would effect this objective by adding courses in international relationships. There you have the same old pattern. We attempt to solve our problems by a bit of addition. Adding a course—that is the method of meeting the problem during a cold war. Fundamentally changing the entire educational system was the method of meeting the problems of a fighting war. It was not merely a matter of adding a few courses in military techniques. It was a matter of permeating all instruction with the philosophy of hatred and killing. Some comparable peacetime philosophy should be made to modify and motivate the entire educational program during peace-time. There is such a philosophy available. But two millenia of history show that men for some perverse reason have not remade education for peaceful objectives. They have at best been satisfied to add a course or two. That has failed, even as the method now in vogue promises failure.

H. S.
The Rediscovery of the Missionary Task*

SINCE the beginning of the previous century the idea has more and more gained ground in the various churches, both in Europe and in America, that missionary work is not an accidental phenomenon which now and then presents itself in the history of Christendom, but that it belongs to the very essence of the Church. A Church which ceases to be missionary in character no longer corresponds to what her Lord expects her to be and sooner or later she will experience the consequences of her neglect. Conversely, a Church which is inwardly strong, which lives from a true faith in Jesus Christ, finds herself impelled to preach the Gospel of her Lord throughout the world. This thought may be regarded as one of the greatest discoveries of the previous century. I do not hesitate to call it one of the weightiest lessons which the Holy Spirit has taught us through the Word of God in our time.

When I ask myself in what manner God has brought these things to our attention, my eye falls on two groups of phenomena. In the first place, God has made use of the increasing distress discernible throughout the world. The peoples of Africa, Asia, and other continents became involved in the great process of development during this past period. They were overwhelmed with institutions of education, with modern business and industry, with all sorts of modern culture propaganda. One of the necessary consequences of this was that these people were uprooted from their old heathen religion and were taken up into the process of secularization which at this very moment threatens to envelop all of mankind. The old morals crumbled, the ancient religious convictions disappeared. Everywhere a new generation arose which broke with the faith of the fathers and merely dreamt of progress in a purely secular sense of the word. This situation created everywhere a feeling of discontent, of confusion, of fear for the future. Thus demoralization made itself master of millions; it was as though the world of spiritual forces disappeared entirely from sight. The future of human history seemed at this moment darker than ever before. The Church, standing in the midst of this confused world, began to understand that she was called to preach with great power the gospel of Him who alone can bring rest and peace. She began to perceive that she herself would be endangered unless she cast herself without scruples into the midst of the battle and emphatically proclaimed that Jesus Christ alone is the hope for a tired and drifting generation. That was the first means by which God brought us to a deeper reflection about the commandment which He had given already many centuries before.

The second way in which God recalled us to our missionary obligation was that of the increasing study of His word. There was a time when interest in Bible-study declined in many churches. Church members lived by all types of Christian books, tracts and edifying literature, but the Bible itself fell into the background. It was subjected to all kinds of criticism, it was called antiquated and no longer adapted to our modern generation. It is remarkable, however, that in the rush of the present day all those books and writings have lost their value and that the Bible still stands stronger than ever. Over against the increasing paganization and impudent unbelief that made its way everywhere, the beauty of the Bible came increasingly to the fore. It spoke with absoluteness and with new strength to our generation and it is worthy of note that a new interest in the Bible, and in what the Bible has to teach us about the way of salvation, is coming to life throughout the Christian world.

This rising interest in the Bible necessarily has made us see that Jesus Christ expects His Church to be a missionary Church to the end of time. The missionary command is not merely the conclusion of the gospel, but it is the beginning of its fulfillment. Without that missionary command the gospel would be incomplete. He who mentions the gospel, mentions in the same breath the great commission, because all the deeds of God, announced to us in the gospel, come to fruition in the missionary command. Thus God has made us read anew in the heat of the battle of our time the meaning of the great commission and through this command He has called us to labor indefatigably until the return of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Jesus the Great Missionary**

What do we mean by missions? The great problem is pressing us anew: Just what is the Idea of

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* This article is the first chapter in Dr. Bavinck's forthcoming book, The Impact of Christianity on the Non-Christian World, announced by the William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.
missions? What do we really do when we send our missionaries out to the heathen world? What is the motive of this action and what is its ultimate purpose? These questions we cannot avoid because in various respects they determine the whole missionary method. We are thus compelled to reflect again upon these problems.

In earlier times the tendency was to regard missions as a deed of mercy, performed by the Church. The Church saw the poverty and the misery of the peoples about her and felt the desire to share with these peoples the riches which she herself had received. Christian mercy was the deepest motive underlying missionary activity.

Today we are convinced that this is hardly a satisfactory description of missionary motivation. It remains too much in the sphere of the human and regards missions unduly as a work of man. If missions are really to be what they ought to be, we must approach them from God's point of view. God is the only One who commissions, and our missionary work is to be understood in the light of God's Word.

The gospel teaches us that Jesus Christ Himself has been sent (compare the Dutch: de zending). He is the true apostolos, the Sent of the Father, the Apostle and High Priest of our profession (Hebrews 3:1). In the gospel of St. John, Jesus continually emphasizes that it is the Father who has sent Him and that He has come only to fulfill His will. He is the only One who has really been sent, and all who were sent later received their charge and their calling from His hand. After His resurrection Jesus spoke to His disciples: “As My Father has sent Me, even so I send you.” There is a subtle connection between the apostolic office of His disciples and the apostleship of Jesus Christ Himself.

For this reason it is not too much to say that the missionary enterprise is, in the deepest sense of the word, the work of Jesus Christ. In an altogether beautiful manner Luke assures us of this in the first verses of the Acts of the Apostles. “The former treatise,” writes St. Luke, “have I made of all that Jesus began both to do and to teach” (Acts 1:1). It is as though he wishes to say: this second book I write to let you see all the things that Jesus continued both to do and to teach. In both books, in the gospel account and in the Acts, Jesus Christ is the only One who acts and teaches. Both books treat of Him. In the Acts of the Apostles it is the glorified Christ who through His apostles continued to forge onward. When Paul went to Ephesus, it was Jesus Christ who went in Paul and through Paul. Jesus Christ performed the miracles and spoke through Paul. When Paul was rejected, Jesus was rejected. Paul himself felt that he was filling up that which was behind the afflictions of Christ in his flesh for His body’s sake, which is the Church (Colossians 1:24). All missionary labor is in the deepest sense the work of the great Apostle, our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorified Savior, who in His Church and through His Church fulfills the task with which the Father has charged Him. Missionary endeavor can be rightly understood only when it is regarded theologically, that is, when we see it as the work of Jesus Christ. What our missionaries do is important only insofar as they are instruments of Him who alone can redeem the world.

Missionary Endeavor: A Function of the Church

If we keep this clearly before us, several things at once become plain. In the first place, we can see from this point of view that missions may not be the work of a society but that they are the responsibility of the Church. She is the body of Christ and in her the exalted Savior continues His work of saving the world. For this reason the missionary is an office-bearer whom Christ Himself has clothed with His office. In Ephesians 4:11 Paul writes that He gave some apostles, some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.

This edification includes the fact that new stones will continually be added. The office-bearers, whom Christ has given to His Church, have the calling not only to perfect the saints, but are charged also to gain others who still belong to the world of darkness, to call them to His marvelous light. As new stones they will receive a place in the wonderful building, the Holy Temple of the Lord, that grows through all the ages (Ephesians 2:21). At the most recent conference of the International Missionary Council the Bishop of Dornakal remarked: “It is the Church’s duty to concentrate all her energies to do the work of Christ. The Church exists not to save itself but to save others.” It is the Church as a whole, then, which is called to take the missionary work in hand and in that way to become the instrument through which Jesus Christ will save the world.

This is also indicated in the well-known words of the sixteenth chapter of St. Matthew, where Peter, and in him all the apostles and the Church which stands on the foundation of the apostles, is given the keys of the Kingdom of heaven. Nowhere is our unlimited responsibility more solemnly put. No, it is not we who have built the Kingdom of heaven: it is Christ who causes it to come through His mediatorial labors. Again, it is not we who can impart the blessings of the Kingdom. There are things which the Lord has retained for Himself. We are only humble servants of the Lord, keybearers, who may not do more than open and shut the door. Yet, how tremendously important this work is! When the Church permits the keys of the Kingdom of heaven to lie unused and rusted, then through her neglect alone she excludes whole
peoples from the Kingdom. There is hardly a thought which makes us tremble so much as this, that it is us to whom the keys have been entrusted.

At the same time it is plain that here we must think of the Church. The keys have not been given to individuals within the Church, to some devout and honored members who understand the commandment. The Church as a whole should realize that she has received this most important task from the hands of Jesus Christ, in order that she may open to others the door that leads to the realm of light and salvation which Christ has prepared for all. She can do this only when she again realizes deeply that the well-known commission of St. Matthew 28:19 may be read thus: I myself go through you. I will make all nations to become my disciples, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. And I will teach them to keep all that I have commanded you. For, behold, I am with you all the days till the end of the world.

That means: When you go, I go in you. Here as so many times in the Holy Scriptures the Lord gives what He commands and does what He tells us to do. He does it in us and through us.

Christ Our Only Confidence

In the second place, our standpoint makes it plain how it is possible, in spite of the overwhelming difficulties of our time, to engage in missions. There was a time—and it does not lie so far behind us—that men dared to think and speak quite optimistically with respect to the missionary task. That was the period in which men talked of “the evangelization of the world in this generation.” That time is now past. The last decades have taught us that missionary work is infinitely more difficult and complicated than was formerly thought; we are beginning to understand that heathenism is rooted deeply in the human soul and that it can be conquered only by the expending of our utmost strength. The world itself is in a much more confused condition. The peoples of Asia and Africa live in a situation of crisis and great spiritual and moral danger. Today the discussion about missions is not conducted in such optimistic terms.

In his book The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World Kraemer says: “The real meeting between Christianity and the Eastern systems of life has not yet taken place, and is still a matter of the future.” Basil Matthews remarks in his study The Clash of World-Forces: “The Church may seem today in the vast conflict of the human scene to hold a thin line with tenuous efforts against enormous odds.” From all mission fields we hear complaints about the increasing difficulty of the work, about the dangers of secularism and materialism. More and more the missionary enterprise is becoming a great test of our faith. Dare we yet accept the challenge? Does it still make sense to perform missionary work while the world in our immediate environment is threatened with the destruction of its own foundations? This question can be satisfactorily answered when we are conscious in our deepest heart that Christ is eager to extend His arms to all the nations, and that His will may not be opposed. When we go, He goes. His command is a promise; He is where we are. This is the inexhaustible source of strength for all who are engaged in the missionary enterprise, and it must be the source of strength for our churches in a century which seems to be so decisive for the future of the human race.

The Thoroughgoing Character of Christ’s Redemption

There is a third thought flowing from the basic idea that it is Jesus Christ who goes to the mission fields in us and through us. If it be true that mission work is none other than the continuing activity of the exalted Lord in calling all nations to His light, then it is also true that this missionary task must concern itself with the whole of man in all his problems and relationships. The following declaration was accepted at the International Missionary Council in Jerusalem in 1928: “The one inclusive purpose of the missionary enterprise is to present Jesus Christ to men and women the world over as their Redeemer, and to win them for entrance into the joy of His discipleship. In this endeavor we realize that man is a unity, and that his spiritual life is indivisibly rooted in all his conditions—physical, mental and social. We are therefore desirous that the programme of missionary work among all peoples may be sufficiently comprehensive to serve the whole man in every aspect of his life and relationship.” In accordance with this conception the Indian Christian K. T. Paul says in one of his books: “The Indian villager is not helped unless he is helped simultaneously in every phase of his life and in regard to every relationship he bears to others. The service must be comprehensive to get anywhere, and it must be simultaneously comprehensive.”

Its Implications for Missions

Here we stand before one of the most fundamental problems of our missionary work. Jesus Christ is a perfect Redeemer. He redeems man in the whole scope of his thinking and living; He saves him for this period and for the next. His redeeming work is therefore in the strict sense of the word all-embracing. He places His hand on every aspect of our life, both of our individual existence and of our social relationship, and “He makes all things new” (Revelation 21:5). St. Paul does not
hesitate to profess: “If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature, old things are passed away, behold, all things are become new” (2 Corinthians 5:17).

It is one of the peculiar characteristics of Calvinism that it has been fully alive to the all-inclusive significance of the message of Christ, and has proclaimed with emphasis that the gospel is more than merely a message of grace for lost sinners. The gospel of Jesus Christ presents norms for the re-ordering of all human relationships; it contains the seed of a new society. It gives us a new conception of the state and it grants light upon social problems and upon the principles of science. The work of Jesus Christ can not be split; we can not share His redeeming grace without giving obedience to His royal word. It is not possible to be a Christian at home and to surrender the world about us to the destructive influence of sin. Whoever belongs to Him belongs to Him in the complete greatness of His work. Thus it is plain that missions should never be confined to a part of the message, but must always present what Christ Himself has shown us, “teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:20). The work of Jesus Christ is an indivisible unity.

Not only is the work of Christ a unity; man is also a unity. His spiritual life is related to his physical condition; his whole existence is bound up with the society of which he is a part. It is not possible to separate him from his economic and cultural circumstances. Nor is it possible to call him in the name of Christ to faith and conversion without showing him in every respect the way to a new life. Man, whoever he may be, to whatever race he may belong, is addressed in the gospel in the amazing complexity of his individual and social existence. Merle Davis has explained it thus: “Christianity makes a sweeping claim that its Founder is Lord of all life,’ but it is only within recent decades that His Missionary Church has accepted the full implication of that claim.”

In the mission field these considerations speak even more strongly than in our relationships here at home. The life of the people whom our missions seek to serve is in general less broken up into all sorts of segments than our home society. They know nothing of an economic life next to a political and scientific and religious life. Their existence is in a much stricter sense of the word a real unity. They live much less as individuals, each determining for himself the life he shall live, but feel in a much stronger degree than we do the ties that bind them to each other. Age-old customs govern the life of these peoples, and their customs are frequently worked out in such detail and reach so deeply into their whole existence, that the individual is controlled by these in nearly all respects. These peoples do not live singly but together. Religion with them is not a matter affecting man in his personal life, but it is a matter of clan, tribe or race.

Among them it is an aspect of their communal life and it shares the same corporate solidarity. In many mission fields the same condition obtains as existed in Europe when Scottish and British missionaries brought the gospel there: the individual is wholly absorbed by the group and his entire life is conditioned by the group. That is the situation which is described in the interesting study of J. Th. Addison about the medieval missionary: “No single man could work by himself, the people must move together or not at all.” Precisely because the life of these people displays a much stronger unity than ours, it is impossible to preach the message of Jesus Christ in any other way than as a word that is directed to the whole of man in all his functions and relationships.

**The Totalitarian View of Religion**

Here we are confronted with one of the most serious difficulties of missionary work. The heathen religions are indivisible unities which control the whole life from the cradle to the grave. This totalitarian characteristic of heathen religion makes it extremely difficult for the missionary to preach the gospel in the appropriate way. The natives are accustomed whenever they build a house to do it religiously; that is to say, their building of a house is a religious ceremony. When they sow their fields they perform a religious rite. When they give a son or a daughter in marriage, or go hunting, or are sick, or bury the dead, when they make war or conclude a peace, when they make the transition from youth to maturity, when they build a village or when they clear a piece of brush and bring it under cultivation—in short, whenever they do anything, the thing they do stands in one form or another in relation to their religious convictions. And the manner in which they do it is accurately determined by their religious customs. It is not possible to describe the life of a tribe without at every point coming across religion as the invisible background. Can the gospel take the place of the old religion? Can it maintain the unity of life while laying new foundations? An old native once said to a missionary in one of the islands of the Indian Archipelago: “We know concerning everything exactly how we should do it, but when we follow you, we know nothing any more. If we accept your Book, how shall we then build our houses? How shall we sow our fields and bury our dead?” That is the embarrassment every heathen has to face when he begins to appreciate the meaning of the gospel.

It is perfectly clear that the missionary will have to answer this question in one way or another. He may not let the converted heathen walk in his old ways. He will have to teach him step by step the new elements which are introduced into his life by Jesus Christ. His whole life must be renewed and
built anew. From now on the converted heathen will belong to a new community, a bigger and more inclusive one than the tribal community in which he has thus far lived, namely, the Church of Jesus Christ. In other words, the heathen enters a new world, each day he makes new discoveries, and it is the missionary who in this process must be his guide. That is the deeper meaning of the words of our Lord: “teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.”

It is not now possible to discuss the full significance of these matters. There are too many questions at issue which we can only gradually begin to understand. Yet it is worthwhile to consider some of the consequences to which these things necessarily lead.

Our All-Sufficient Lord

I remind you here of the important doctrine concerning the three offices of our Lord. He is our Prophet, our Priest, and our King. He is our Prophet, our Teacher. That means that He, through His missionary Church, points out the truth of God to the heathen nations. When these nations listen to His gospel their old religion crumbles and they are confronted with the eternal truth of God’s Word. They begin to see God and the world, man and society, in a new light; Christ takes away the blindness of their eyes so that they gain a new insight into all things. That is one of the momentous aspects of missions. It is teaching, that is, bringing men into contact with Him who concerning Himself said that He is the truth.

But missionary work is more than this. It introduces the priestly redeeming love of Christ to the heart of the Gentile. To show that love of Christ, it is indispensable that the missionary himself be a bearer of Christ’s image, that he become one with them to whom he preaches, that he enter into their needs, suffer under their sorrows, heal their sick, have compassion on the poor and distressed. And in all this he must point to Him who alone can give comfort and help. The love of Jesus Christ must shine in every act of the missionary and must permeate his whole life. The heathen can appreciate the love of Christ only when it is literally lived before his eyes, when it is not only spoken in words, but made understandable in deeds. This is not the easiest but certainly one of the most important aspects of missionary work.

Finally, missionary work has also this side, that it brings the converted heathen into contact with Christ as his King. He is the Lord of all life and there is no spot of ground concerning which He does not proclaim: “It is Mine.” After having found Christ as his Savior the heathen has to learn how he can build his whole life on Christ the foundation. His family life will change through Christ. In short, everything in his life will be touched by the renewing strength of Him who draws man out of darkness to His wonderful light. It is exactly this last aspect of the work that causes the missionary so many difficulties. Precisely because these people live communally and form a community, the new life can be developed only by way of a new society. Not only the individual must be renewed, but the whole community must become another thing.

The missionary Christian Keysser, who labored many years in New Guinea, relates in one of his writings that the younger churches in the mission field sense the need of regularly held congregational meetings, in which they can discuss everything that is important in their new situation. “All newly arising difficulties within the congregation, needs and dangers are discussed at these meetings, and the decisions thus resulting are made plain to all.” These young churches growing up in a world which until now had known a strongly accentuated communal life, and in which the individual could exist only by his being taken up into the stream of society, strongly feel the need of associating with one another also in their Christian life. Thus new customs gradually develop, new social relationships make their appearance. New ways of social intercourse, new agricultural usages, a new style of architecture and sculpture, in short, a new culture—then begins to emerge.
A FEW years ago while the war was still raging, I was standing on the beautiful deck of a magnificent lounge in the heart of the largest (but one) ocean liner afloat. The splendor of that lounge is hard to overestimate. Its walls were massive, beautifully finished, with panelling of bird's eye maple, and containing many artistically hand-painted murals. The stately columns that seemed to support the ceiling gave the mammoth room an appearance of a building quite by itself. The furniture was exquisitely wrought, yet not the stiff designs of earlier periods. It was fashioned for comfort. Truly one could sit in this great lounge in the bowels of the great ship, and dream. It seemed a respite from the angry world and dangerous sea in which the massive hull sailed first in this direction, then in that.

As I think back upon that scene of the war years, there occurs to me a striking analogy.

One could sit in that majestic lounge to think, midst surroundings of quiet and beauty, feeling the heart beat of the great ship as she plowed her eastward course at twenty-nine knots. At such a time one could almost feel secure in and with such accoutrements to his happiness. And yet, in his more thoughtful hours he knew full well that within an hour all that beauty and strength and the security it proffered could be on the bottom of the mighty ocean, filled with darkness only, and against the nicely pointed ceiling would float bodies from which the souls had taken flight.

The analogy is not fantastic. Its ground is in reality. The destruction of beauty and tranquillity, and easy thought is part of our world scene. The scene in the ship's lounge is quite like the scene of our American life and even of our good Calvinism in America. We are surrounded with wonderful privileges, and can dream in gentle contentment. The fact that all our comfortable enjoyments are extremely evanescent neither occurs to us sufficiently, nor moves us enough. The fact of the Atomic Age, that the days are evil, does not move us to forsake our easy and tranquil dreams of luxury, and step into the winds and rains that prevail on the bridge of the ship, there to keep sharp lookout for the enemies that would fain destroy the ship and us.

How Shall We Escape?

This is not a thought we can afford to neglect except at our peril. It is my opinion that in our day we are being guilty of this neglect.

I am afraid! This is not rhetoric. It is a fact. I confess it. The Psalmist says: "What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee." He seems to say that trust comes best after real fear. Today only the ignorant are unafraid. And then there are those, of course, who are unafraid as they trust God. I am not ignorant, and there is usually room for the perfection of trust.

We have entered a brand new era of history, in which we have progressed so far that inventors and discoverers are desperately fearful of the products of their own minds. That is something very new. The wisdom of men has come to an impasse, it is quite silent, and the most intelligent response is not a directive lecture, but a stary look that seems to say, "And where do we go from here?"

Not long ago I spoke to some good friends of my fears for the future. The reaction was that my fears were not so much well founded in reality as they were a hang-over from the night of war I had then recently passed through. Things, they said, were really quite normal and what I had seen in Europe of war's desolation and hellishness was extremely abnormal. I was told to try and forget that desolation and hellishness, and throw away the dark glasses. Basically the argument ran, "We are back to normalcy now, and everything is as usual."

But somehow that "hang-over" has not passed, nor even diminished during the many succeeding months of civilian life. I can never live again as though what happened in Europe, Asia, and Africa, and on the Isles of the sea, happened only there, but once, and is not likely to happen again. Yes, happen again, I fear, with increased intensity wherever men live. I can never live again with that easy complacency with which our American way of life naturally endowed me. My God in heaven keeps the stark tragedies of those days as fresh in my mind as if they happened only yesterday.

To speak now of this darkness of tomorrow to the average American so that the complacency is destroyed, is no mean undertaking. I do not write
without great hesitation. It has something of the unpleasant. There's nothing really “nice” about the person who says that the flaky, brown pie has some strychnine in the filling. Comfortable smugness will usually arise and say, “It isn't so.” But that belongs to the nature of complacency. We just don't seek the truth as bravely as we sometimes pretend. The laws of intellectual and moral honesty just don't work like, say, the law of gravity.

And so to speak of ourselves and our rising generation in the atomic age is one thing; to speak so that the force of the argument will be received is quite another. I am aware of my own great limitations. How shall one keep a precise balance between heart and mind in such a discussion. Again, the large percentage of my readers will suffer from the grave limitation from which most Americans suffer, namely, their personal remoteness from the disasters of the last war. I mean, a news story about whistling bombs and crying men is one thing. To be among those crying men is something else again. Even those who know the dread cost of having lost a dear one in that conflict, witness the catastrophes of war remotely. There are things that impress men more than death. There were many who welcomed death, and even prayed for it.

How shall we then duly impress our youth, and their leaders as well, with the immense seriousness of the age in which they live? Suppose we offer as food for thought that the potential destruction of our largest cities can become actual in a matter of hours. I have said “potential destruction.” The first American reaction is—“Yes, but that is far from probable destruction.” And that is the despicable deceit with which so many are blinding themselves, and which I would cry against. Is Chicago more pious than Berlin? Is New York seeking God more than Brest did in ’44? Is San Francisco worshipping the true God with greater sincerity than Plymouth of ’39? And is Podunk, Idaho, better than Lidice, or Coventry? I speak of religious and moral standards, of course. And if it be true that our cities have no more virtue than those of Europe, then we may no longer think of the destruction that shall come as a dreamy potential, nor a fearful probability, but we are forced to think of it as a gruesome certainty. “IF” is out of the picture. Only “WHEN” is left. The naive, “it can't happen here” must be banished—absolutely banished from our thinking. All complacency in this matter is only a whip to hasten the destruction and make us less prepared for its advent. The basis of my argument is simple. The God Who made heaven and earth has established the moral principles by which His world must live. He Himself does not cease to live by His own principles. Therefore the wrecks of time must be construed as the God-ordained fruits of human failure. How shall we escape?
attitude, not only among American Christians in general, but even in the supposedly inspirational meetings where the ex-servicemen, finding no fault with what is said, are chafing under what is left unsaid. They are thinking in terms of wrecked cities, villages and towns they ironically called “liberated.” They cannot forget the stress and strain of battle and the infinite weariness it brought. They cannot forget the hundreds of homeless wanderers they saw, hungry and lonely, with all their earthly possessions bundled in an old table cloth. May our gracious God never so remove His grace from us that we forget these things as judgments of His hand.

And shall we put in a word too for the millions of Europeans and Asias whose lives are best described by one adjective to cover it all—BROKEN! And also for those who cannot speak for themselves, who lie in cemeteries far and wide, to whom politicians promised that they would never go overseas, and from whom preachers withheld the terrors of divine judgments. They usually said it all in the words they used so pointedly, “We were never prepared for this.”

Let us observe the complacency of leaders just a little. Among them I find what appears to be the spirit of isolationism, and a refusal to face what is really coming. Prayers and sermons are pretty much as they were before the war. Conferences, though increased in number, are quite as usual. Church councils are as usual. In reference to the latter we may remark that the highest Church council of my own denomination only last summer, in response to a request from ex-chaplains to meet, thought only of such a meeting as a lark. Any meeting that would consider Chaplains’ problems in the past war, and consideration of the present call for Chaplain services in the Armed forces of our country was considered only as a meeting of play-boys. Whatever the precision of my interpretation may be, the point must be conceded: That Church council said, “We don’t want to think in terms of war, past or future.” I would insist that this is complacency. It is avoiding reality.

Once more, discussions among spiritual leaders too often lay the fault for catastrophic world events at the door of the world’s politicians and economists, as though they didn’t know that the cause must rather be laid at the door of ministers of the Word. If the forces that direct blessing and catastrophe are not conceived as spiritual by spiritual leaders, then those conceptions are not only not Reformed, they are not even Christian. Yet how much is not written and said by religious leaders that sounds like the familiar “International bankers, imperialism, balance of power.” That I attribute to spiritual complacency. We may never think or live as though we didn’t know that all God’s judgments, always and ever, are consequent to spiritual declension. Not spiritual declension in the world generally, but in the Church of God. My point once more is to emphasize that the lion has roared, and we have not trembled sufficiently. We are still paying too much attention to barking dogs.

**Universal Military Training**

Another common view among our leaders respects Universal Military Training. There are many opposed to it for reasons too various to entertain at this point. If all other things were equal, I too should be opposed to it. To say it mildly, I confess to hate it. However I do not believe all things are equal in this matter. As stated above the “if” of another war must be eliminated; we may only recognize the “when.” To deny or ignore that the world is a virtual powder-keg is folly. To suggest that the last war was won in the laboratory and the next one will be still more so is an extremely ill-conceived point made by arm-chair strategists. I spent a little of my Army days with the infantry in combat and for the sake of those who fought there I indict the arm-chair strategists for talking so much nonsense. To emphasize a practical point, I need but call to mind the evening that seven hundred replacements came to my battalion of one thousand men, seven hundred fresh from the States, and all of them just six weeks in the Army. Untrained soldiers, going to the battle line. The civilian will blame the Army for letting such things happen, but when soldiers are needed, they are needed as the battle goes.

The general idea of the average American was and remains to this day that the last war was easily won. That is contrary to fact. More than once we could have lost it. And the difficulty we met caused many thousands of American soldiers to go to the battle line without training. And now there are even religious leaders who dare to state with audacious complacency, “We don’t need Universal Military Training.”

There is the stronger argument against Military training of course. That is the spiritual one. But the strongest is also the worst argument. Army life carries grave spiritual dangers to the lives of our young men. No one cares to deny that. But, I am not at all sure that the spiritual danger there, under challenge, is really greater than the danger of the formal easy-life-religion which we smugly hand out while we say to our youth, “You’re a pretty good lot.” Real religion is at least this: To stand before the face of the Living God, alone, and in Christ. And if our youth can’t do that out there while we say to our youth, “You’re a pretty good lot.” Real religion is at least this: To stand before the face of the Living God, alone, and in Christ. And if our youth can’t do that out there now, just what gives us the right to believe that they are truly doing it at home? Is it my sincere conviction that the religion of modern youth can well do with the challenge. Oh no, we will not cast them out on their own without good cause, but we don’t say either that the danger is so great that we
deny the requirement of national defense, thereby intending to spare our youth. To bless our youth today, we as leaders must prepare them so to live in the presence of the Living God that they will serve Him even when spiritual advantages are reduced to a minimum. Let every spiritual leader ask today in all seriousness: Just how would all these people that come to my Church on Sunday morning react when they are stripped of every modern convenience except a covering for their nakedness? (This is no dream—it has been and still is the experience of thousands!) How would they stand all alone in the world? Would our virgin daughters also offer their bodies then for a bit of food? Would demoralization also grasp our youth in its ruthless clutch and destroy them because they only saw religion as something easy and comfortable, and no one ever spoke to them about the total absence of even the common conveniences and blessings of life?

The Curse of Easy Religion

Our leaders are too often guilty of cultivating the easy religion attitude. This can only be the result of complacency. Today especially we have youth rallies galore. Inspirational meetings with carefully selected speakers. Bible conferences, some led by excellent teachers. All these are mostly fun, very easy to attend, and made as attractive as possible. BUT, the way to a closer walk with the living God is not easy, say, like eating a banana split. What God taught us as we were clawing the dirt on the bottom of our fox-holes didn't faintly resemble anything our young people are being given to, supposedly, keep them in the straight and narrow way. The soft-lighted houses of worship, warm, and with deep-napped carpets, amidst beautiful music, harmonious song, and exotic perfumes where our youth are cozily communing together under an inspirational address, can scarcely point the way back to a closer walk with God. It excites neither, “Jesus, I my cross have taken,” nor “Lord, like the Publican I stand.” I do not by any means condemn such meetings. I only say that they are wholly inadequate. We may not think of these as really satisfying our needs. God forgive us when we think so. In the midst of the tribulation to come these same youth or their children will say: “Why didn’t our leaders point out THIS to us.” To true religion there is no easy path.

And now in our day, finally, our leaders may not present anything as if it is as usual. If we do, we are blind leaders of the blind. This is the Atomic Age.

What is the answer? What do we need? How must we give leadership in this threatening age?

We need a revival!! Though this sounds common, let us not think for a moment that it really is. It is basic.

To say we need a revival is to say we need something which we cannot make ourselves. Our problem, our whole problem is epitomized in this. We must not let that concept pass. That’s the kernel, the core. We need what we cannot make ourselves. We can make atomic bombs, but we cannot make what we need. We need! Wait! We are coming to the proper place now, or thought. The Christian always begins here, really. The day that Christians everywhere drop to their knees and pray with the Psalmist: “Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee O Lord!”, then we have the advent of the real thing.

“Depths.” Just those are so hard to think of in present day lush America. However, we must face reality with sobriety. We must face it while we are sitting in our over-stuffed furniture, and reposing on comfortable beds, and dining at sumptuously supplied boards, in heated rooms. Rise if you can in the midst of these things to the Word of God that declares: “In this world ye shall have tribulation.”

“Tribulation!” When we study our times honestly, and see ourselves as God sees us, then we can see those depths just ahead of us. On the horizontal perspective I have no hope for tomorrow. If I permit myself to think I exaggerate the evils of tomorrow, I deceive myself. All the instruments of contact with the world around me cry out, “For what debacle are we headed?” And in the same breath I must add: “Prepare to meet Thy God, O Israel!”

The Vertical Perspective

It is asked, “Is this the Calvinistic approach?” Are we not to make the best of what we have? Does not God reign? To all this we must answer affirmatively not only, but add, that just those truths are only properly conceived when we have understood the truth of the above remarks in regard to the destruction to come and meeting the Living God. This is the vertical perspective.

The vertical perspective does not admit of any real life on the horizontal plane, except that that life is fundamentally doomed without the vertical line. The truly Calvinistic vertical approach cries out of the depths of the horizontal plane, “Back to the Living God, the Sovereign God! The God of Sovereign Grace, and Sovereign Justice. To the God Who is immeasurably merciful to the penitent, but ‘Who will by no means clear the guilty.’”

We are living in a day when it appears that God’s Grace is beginning to be withdrawn, and Satan’s leash is being stretched. The story of Job is apparently beginning again. That this is true seems evident when some statesmen and scientists have said, “We have muffed our efforts to redeem civilization; here religion, see what you can do.” It may appear
that this says rather that Satan is being bound. Would that it would prove that! But these scientists and statesmen are only giving indication of the more than likely eventuality, that things will rapidly become worse. They have said: "We in our pursuit of progress and development have come upon greater problems than we can solve. We are indeed about to defeat ourselves hopelessly and irrevocably. The world is going to pot unless you do something about it."

Now in this peculiar state of things we find various reactions on the part of the religion. The liberal says, "We've got to get together, do good and love one another really this time. Virtually he says to the murderer whose hands are dripping with blood and in whose eye the very Devil lives, 'Now, now, you must be a better boy.'" That's all he says. He is religiously suffering from paranoiac-schizophrenia. In plain language, he's religiously crazy. Revelation and reality are hopelessly confused in his thinking.

Then there is the reaction on the part of the Fundamentalist. He usually starts with man, even when he doesn't quite mean to. He "wins souls." He organizes Youth for Christ movements. He cries aloud "Come to the Savior,—you can really do it." He asks, "Have you counted the cost if your soul should be lost?" He doesn't approach the prospect ever with, "Have you counted the cost of following Jesus?" He throws out the specific commandments of God and proceeds immediately to hang on the neck of the converted the burdens of his own traditions. I would call him religiously neurotic.

What does the Calvinist say? The formal Calvinist today says, "everything is as usual." He has the creeds in his Psalter; he goes to Church, and is an all around good fellow who is going to get a big surprise unless he wakes up.

The living Calvinist. What is His response? Says he: "The ax is at the root of the tree." He recognizes in his own time the voice of His God and Savior. He hears God's warning. The rumble of His thunder becomes increasingly perceptible. He refreshes Himself in the vertical perspective as Jonathan once strengthened David's hand in the same thing. The living Calvinist more than ever, makes God his absolute preoccupation. His only hope for time and eternity becomes ever more clearly defined against the background of every fading earthly joy. He stands amid the chaos, and looks up to the God of order. He stands face to face with His God and Father. This is his conscious experience by faith. It is just as real as the broken humanity around him, to whom he testifies of this God. And this God speaks to him too. He says: "I, even I am thy Saviour, and beside me there is none other."

I emphasize that a man can stand in this proper relationship to God in these days only when he sees all his carnal enjoyments as the dew of the morn-}

ing. The brilliant Light that God is must reduce all mere natural light without God to stygian darkness.

When we adequately conceive of this, our danger of complacency is past. When we properly comprehend this, then we can speak properly to our youth in the Atomic age. Not before. Only then.

How Shall It Be Done?

But how shall we bring this about? Surely no plans of organizations of ours are equal to it. At best we can indicate the difficult route that must be traveled. Once more, to think that the route that leads back to God is an easy one in our present world of fat comforts, is to open the realm of thought to no limit of nonsense.

Let me indicate that route, however difficult it may be.

The basic requirement that comes before all others is that each and every Christian, high and low, teacher and pupil, must thrust his hand into his own bosom. The fight is not won by any of us on this side of the grave. This does not discredit perseverance of the saints, but only indicates the road the saints must travel to persevere. We must really examine ourselves. The fact that this is an old story does not render it easier, but complicates it rather.

The self-examination must issue in the complete denial of ourselves. Neither is this an ordinary remark since it lies at the heart of the teaching of Jesus. There is never anything ordinary about the teachings of Jesus as we think of things ordinary. He only taught truths that were and are still superlative. His teaching about self-denial is one of those we would have least discovered ourselves. Indeed we could not and would not have suggested it, and even now its meaning can only be understood in the presence of implicit faith. Self-denial issues in the understanding that the answer to our present problem is not in ourselves. We don't have an answer in any sense to the problem. All we can do is stir our confusion. The supreme answer isn't of the horizontal perspective at all, but lies crystal clear in the vertical perspective. God alone can help us. He has all the answers. His answers are available to us in His Word in which He still speaks. Not only are His answers available but understand-able, for the illumining Spirit of Pentecost never returned, so to speak, to heaven. He is with us.

The solemn quest for that supreme answer lies therefore along one road, and only one. It is the old road. The road Isaiah, and Jeremiah, and Eli­jah knew. The road Christ Himself traveled without detour or deviation. The road of prayer and attendance upon the Word.

No, the ordinary prayers we make are not sufficient. What? Are prayers, our prayers, then ordi-
nary prayers? Yes, far and away too often the prayers of God's people today are ordinary prayers. What makes us say a thing like that? Is that not judging? But if they were more than ordinary prayers, where does that revival stay? Or are there those rash enough to say that we have been revived? Complacency is apt to conclude even that. But I am safe in saying that our complacency has not yet reached that stage.

Our praying must ascend from the depths. From the depths of the complete denial of self. From the depths of a revived consciousness of sin. No revivals of history ever came without that revival of the deep consciousness of sin. Out of the blackness of our social, political, economic and moral night, we must really pray again. As the judgments of God are progressive, so our confession and pleading must become more urgent. Withal we must hate and loathe the idolatry of our hearts that makes us sticklers for personal honor, and that causes us to place so much value on our earthly toys. We must fight to overcome that in us which causes us rather to be found guilty of taking God's name in vain than to be found an overt adulterer. We must deny ourselves, if ever we are to really pray.

In Scripture special pleading with God in times of stress and affliction is always attended with fasting. Dare we recommend private fasting? The denial of legitimate and good pleasures of the body for the sake of the soul, in order that we may pray more earnestly? This sounds weird to us in 1948, but it was not weird at all in our Source-Book. And that is the only ground I care to argue from. Calvin recommended it. But Jesus demanded it. Surely when we threw out the habits of Rome, a little meat went with the bone.

My contention is that our times are so dark, and the clouds are so ominous, that fasting is returning as a requirement. No, not as an end in itself, and never with notions of asceticism, nor to be seen of men, but that our prayers may rise more earnestly to the Hearer of the penitent suppliant's cry. This will have to be done in secret. It is impossible to organize for that. It must arise from within the individual through the Spirit and the Word. We must be willing to think about this alone. The leaders must be willing to think about this. Seriously and prayerfully. We ourselves, as leaders, must stand much more alone in the presence of the living God. Then not so many of our spiritual tasks among men will have the appearance of "dry-runs."

Such prayer will quite automatically create a greater hunger and thirst for the Word of life. It will open more fully God's gifts of peace, comfort, joy, and direction to all who follow in that route. The Word will be a fresh fountain then in the midst of the desert where Satan tempts us always to complacency and a life of religious ease.

Out of a Fox Hole

And what must we tell our youth? I would tell them God is coming. Soon, very soon, we will all have to stand before Him-alone, the true and living God, Sovereign Lord and Gracious Redeemer, and the Judge in the only Judgment that will really count. The formal trimmings will then be torn away from our religious lives, and God will look at what we are, what we have believed in our hearts, and how we have fought.

Come, my fellow slaves and bondservants to smugness! Let us pray again. Let us pray again, for we have been given to survive the conflict. We fought then for three freedoms you know. Or was it four? Yes it was four, but the fourth we have not gained. We are not freed from want. We want today more than ever. We want freedom from our slavery to complacency. We want the wonderful complacency of a more perfect faith. We want what we cannot make ourselves; so come, let us pray.

And now I have told you. What I have written so imperfectly and so haltingly is part of a promise I once made to God in a fox-hole. I remember the roadside, I remember the slope of the ground, I remember the trees, I remember the acrid smell of powder and the stench of death, and also the samples of hell that broke around my head. I am highly privileged to write this. My privilege makes me sorry I cannot do it better. But the promise I spoke of ran like this: "How dreadful is this place! If Thou Lord wilt bring me out of this place, I'll not forget it to the easy Church at home." I only lament that I must put it all down in words. For some meanings words are very weak.

Let us awake. Let us rise. Let us awake, rise, and pray again.

Do Thou, Lord God of Hosts, revive us in the midst of our years!
Dear Prof. Bouma:

ALLOW me to make a few remarks with regard to the splendid article “Our Own Grub Street” by Professor John Timmerman in the January issue of THE CALVIN FORUM. I heartily agree with the sentiments expressed in this article, particularly the references to our own Grub Street. I believe Professor Timmerman has hit the nail on the head with a golden hammer. Just for the sake of emphasis I have gone over my records to prove the point.

As I look back on the past sixteen years of spare-time writing I at least find that a pat on the back is due the Editors of our Christian Reformed periodicals. Making a rough estimate of my successes and failures thus far I find that out of approximately one hundred submissions, Editors, Publishers, etc., I have had about two hundred ten acceptances in our circles, and about twenty rejects. This includes poems for the most part, essays, columns, short stories, and a couple of novels. The seventy odd remaining submissions sent to other than our own Editors netted me practically nil, except a fist-full of rejection slips. So you see we aren’t doing too badly by the free-lance writers in our circles considering our size.

Truly, my first love in the realm of literature is poetry. If I could find more and better markets for this type of writing I would stick to it. But as it is too many folk look askance at the fellow who “reels off rhymes.” As a result I have turned to fiction and find it more profitable. Especially the short, short story appeals to me, since in writing poetry one acquires the habit of condensing his thought until it oozes with fragrance and melody. However, I have too recently started channeling my energies in this direction to know how great my success will be. Of course, the American market is large enough—2,500 or more markets. But apart from our own circles, how far can a conscientious Christian go?

I find it has been one of my greatest problems to overcome provincialism and narrowness so as to serve my Creator on a broader scale, even beyond the pale of our own little Christian Reformed group. This takes time and effort and study, and is a real handicap to wider service. And yet it is a real challenge to stay distinctly Calvinistic in our expression of life in literature.

Apparently to make real money on the American market one must chuck his principles and dip his pen in the cesspool of iniquity. But God forbid! If our pen must be turned to the swill barrels to gain fame or dollars, we should remember the price our Savior paid to redeem us from these same swill barrels that only lead to the bottomless pit. As true Calvinists we should make this a matter of prayer and go forward in faith. We may not make a fortune by this method, but at least we will be using our sanctified common sense. For only that which is pure and holy and uplifting has the breath of immortality in its veins. All other has the germ of death in it before it is even put to paper!

Personally I love the grand, soaring, sublime Milton best of all. Especially when he sings in his Comus.

“Mortal, that would follow me,
Love Virtue, she alone is free,
She can teach ye how to climb
Higher than the сфere clime:
Or, if Virtue feeble were,
Heav’n itself would stoop to her.”

Thus, if we can keep in mind the power of purity and the right of righteousness we shall be a leavening leaven and a salting salt to this sin-sick world. However, if we succumb, like several of our own Christian writers, to the urge of cheap sensuality, we are lost, and our Calvinistic distinctiveness vanishes like a vapor.

The remedy for Our Own Grub Street as proposed by Professor Timmerman sounds ideal, but is it practical? I for one have often dreamed and hoped and prayed for more time to do my writing. But so far all my lines have been squeezed out in spare time like a towel squeezed through a wringer. However, I wonder if it is really good for a writer in this practical age to isolate himself from real life and try to write a living literature, a literature that is vibrant with emotion and touches life at all its nerve-ends? I feel a two-year grant releasing a person from the worry of making a living, might even be detrimental. In fact if, let us say, such a writer could be made a grant of a two-year period specifying that its recipient be employed half days or half of the week to keep his contact with life alive and his mind flexible, I feel it would be a more worthwhile expenditure. For too many authors are so book-minded and abstract in their approach to life that they fail to touch other lives with their messages. To write, to teach, to preach one must know life and know it by hard experience, especially in this age of ultra-realism. To substantiate this statement simply glance down the aisles of time. How did a Homer, a Vergil, a Dante, a Milton, a Shakespeare come into being? By sitting in a corner playing dominoes or dilly-dallying between the pages of a book? Yes, in part. But their primary source of power was contact with life, with all its burning faggots of love and hate, its jealousies, its razor-edge realities.

This two-year grant proposition may have its possibilities, but meanwhile I plead for a Christian Authors’ League. We need such an organization badly for guidance and encouragement. I feel I might have been saved many a heart-ache and head-ache if I could have had such guidance. The path of trial and error is a hard path. But let us not leave our struggling authors go floundering about in this fashion in the future!

I am convinced a man like Professor Timmerman could be instrumental in organizing such a group, for his article gives evidence of his vital interest in the matter. Let’s see some real action along this line soon!

Meanwhile, as struggling scribes, we always have the comfort that “Not a hair shall fall from our head without the will of our heavenly Father,” and also that “All things work together for good to them that love the Lord.”

SIMPON C. WALBURG.

REFORMED INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF MISSIONS

CALVIN FORUM,
Grand Rapids, Mich.
March 26, 1948.

Dear Dr. Bouma:

IN the March issue of the FORUM Dr. Hoogstra in the article “That They May Be One” is aggrieved that the Christian Reformed Synod of 1947 did not approve of the Reformed International Council of Missions. In a footnote he further states: “This Synod did not adopt the proposal because of a few minor practical difficulties. Apart from the fact that representatives from three continents saw a real need, especially South Africa, we would think that the advisory committee would have taken a chapter out of the last twenty-five years of ecumenicity.”

If we now refer to the decision of the Ecumenical Synod in regard to this matter we note that nothing is said of the...
crying need for such a Council. That Synod merely said: “Your committee advises Synod to recommend to the three National Synods the appointment of two by each Synod who will then constitute an international Committee of Missions for consultative purposes. This newly constituted Committee of Missions shall consider its task to be the study and dissemination of Reformed Principles of missions and consultations in matters concerning mission policy.”

No grounds are given—no need is established. Surely the mere fact that men from “three continents” say so does not establish the need of such a Council, especially not, when as far as we know, there was not an expert in Missions among them.

Dr. Hoogstra further states in his article that modern missions demand ecumenicity because of embarrassing situations on the mission field. Surely this is no argument for a Reformed Mission Council. Where are there such embarrassing situations? The three churches concerned do not work together on one field or in one country. If they did there would be no such situations. All would know that we are essentially one.

The embarrassing situations are there, not because of Reformed working together in one country, but because of other groups. There can be no real hope to eliminate these embarrassments.

Until the real need is established Synod did well in not approving such a Council. As far as the practical difficulties are concerned, we agree, the advisory committee might have been a little more explicit. We might have said, why spend time and money to give a few leaders of the church the opportunity of interesting contacts and the pleasure of foreign travel when the real profit of the churches has not been established.

It might well be asked what is the real profit to the churches of the First Ecumenical Synod? The impression of many is: “the mountain has labored and brought forth a mouse”! The very few enthusiasts for Reformed Ecumenicity, in answer to this criticism, point to the future. Great things will be accomplished! We hope that this will prove to be true. In the meanwhile, let us keep our feet on the ground.

Sincerely,
Ralph J. Bos.

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**From Our Correspondents**

**FROM SOUTH INDIA**

The Editor-in-Chief,

CALVIN FORUM

Grand Rapids, Mich., U.S.A.

Dear Dr. Bouma:

It is indeed a far cry from snow-mantled Grand Rapids to tropical Adoni where dust-laden spring winds have already sent the thermometer up into the nineties. But the missionary, if he be an old campaigner, cheerfully accepts every vicissitude of life as a part of the Kingdom service for which God has chosen him.

Leaving Grand Rapids on November 8th, it took us two months to reach Bombay, almost one-half of this time, however, being spent with a Christian attorney friend and his family near Paterson, New Jersey. The delay, due to repeated postponements in the sailing of a freighter which was to convey us to India, was turned to good account inasmuch as many pleasant contacts were made with Christian Reformed and other Calvinistic groups in the neighborhood of Paterson.

Reflecting on these experiences, just before sailing, three impressions seem to stand out in my mind:

1. A sense of gratification that my modest contributions to the FORUM over the past decade had caused so many people to say, “We have never met, but we feel we know you quite well through your letters to the FORUM.” It was also good to know that your journal has entrenched itself so firmly in the hearts and lives of the majority of intellectuals in our churches.

2. A genuine appreciation of the warm cordiality which so many Christian Reformed people showed us, in spite of the fact of our being strangers in the East. Evidently the news of my affiliation with the Denomination had travelled a good way beyond Grand Rapids.

3. I was deeply impressed by the solidarity and basic unity of our Denomination despite its diffusion over wide sections of the North American continent. It was also significant to find among the clergy and laity an increasing acceptance of what Dr. Velbeke so clearly enunciated in the course of his inspiring address at the 1947 Synod (which your correspondent had the privilege of hearing) that the spread of the Gospel was the main task of the New Testament institutional church.

**Free India**

After an absence of eighteen months we returned to an India which had certainly changed, but not to the extent we had been led to expect. There was, in the provinces of Bombay and my own Madras, at any rate, a new atmosphere of subdued optimism and in trains, hotels and other public places everybody seemed to be more friendly and communicative. Even my wife’s Nordic skin and my brother’s clerical collar were accepted by people we rubbed shoulders with in a spirit of extreme goodwill and bonhomie. Clearly the removal of the yoke of foreign rule, mild as it had been, was a relief to all classes of Indians.

Whatever tragedies and atrocities may have been perpetrated in Northern Hindustan and Pakistan in the name of "Freedom", and however bitter the feelings of outraged Hindu and Moslem refugees, South India has remained quiet and free from major incidents. There are, of course, cogent reasons for this state of affairs and I shall let a British owned daily speak to your readers, as such a statement would be free from any possible provincial bias. Writing editorially, The Madras Mail said:

“Visitor after visitor from the troubled North has remarked upon the tranquility of South India, and on the manner in which members of all communities live here in harmony together. They do so because they have inherited from their forefathers a fine tolerance and breadth of outlook. The South is in many respects the true India. The roots of its people go deep into the past. The various waves of invaders from beyond the limits of the sub-continent exhausted themselves before they reached the farther south. The South has had its wars, petty things they were in the light of modern conflicts, and has had its invaders, but they were mostly of the land, and contributed to the richness of its social and cultural inheritance.

“There are parts of the South which have never echoed to the footsteps of the armed aggressor, where a kindly culture has produced a broad tolerance and mutual understanding that made room for all kinds of cultures. The persecuted Jews, the early Christians from Palestine and the Middle East, the Arabs with their learning and their trade, and many others were welcomed and treated as guests.”

As Kingdom workers we are naturally humbly grateful to God for mercifully enabling us and our fellow-laborers to press
forward, not too badly hampered, in our task of proclaiming the Good Tidings, building up our converts in the Faith, and giving our boys and girls as sound a Christian education as our limited resources will permit. We have recently met and spoken with a few British and American missionaries whose work in the North has been so dislocated and hindered as to render evacuation necessary. Our hearts go out to these and their many adherents, the fate of whom is still in doubt.

**Gandhi and Christ**

Mahatma Gandhi's tragic end has been accorded such worldwide publicity that very little could be added to the sum total of knowledge concerning the life and work of this remarkable man. I would, however, like to place before your readers some of the reactions to his death, particularly as these affect Christian thought and Kingdom work in India.

To begin with, Gandhi suffered no martyrdom but assassination at the hands of a fanatical reactionary who, with many of his kind, believed that too many concessions were being made to Moslems at the expense of Hindu prestige and welfare. It was a mercy that the man who fired the fatal shots was not a Moslem, but an ultra-orthodox Hindu. It is probably due to this fact alone that there have been no fresh outbreaks of violence other than an understandable public reaction against the Hindu Mahasabha and another extremist organization to which a few Moslems adhered. There were several whose work was very genuine grief among all classes throughout the country.

For over thirty years a rebel against British authority, and a revolutionary, Gandhi, since August 1947, has been acclaimed as "The triumphant architect of India's freedom". During the five months preceding his untimely death, he was probably the greatest single factor on the side of peace and order in a sub-continent which was thrown into confusion and, in parts, internecine strife, by the withdrawal of the old regime in favor of bifurcation into Hindu and Moslem Dominions. The Mahatma's unique influence was beginning to have the steadying effect which so many true patriots longed for, and his sudden removal has had a bitter blow to the people of India and Pakistan in their efforts to achieve political peace and communal harmony.

The Hindu public, after idolizing Mohandas Gandhi for many years, has deified and worshiped him since his death. Many extravagant claims have been made regarding his superhuman or even divine origin, but perhaps the most startling has been the Mahatma's identification with the historic Christ. Gandhi's followers and admirers brushes aside mention of their thousands of gods and godlets, many of them greatly revered, have compared their national hero with none other than our Divine Redeemer and King. In this audacious step Hindu leaders may have taken a leaf out of the book of a number of liberal churchmen in this country, and in America and Britain, who have for many years admired Gandhi and his "Chaitikleness" and his "adherence to" the teachings contained in the Sermon on the Mount, and have even admitted him into their own magic circle of doctrinally diluted, emasculated humanistic Christianity.

The late M. K. Gandhi was a profound philosopher, a pious and humble seeker after the truth and an intrepid leader who courageously went forth to bear sundry British and other "lions" in their own dens. But how could he be regarded as a Christian when he did not even pretend to believe in the Christ as being the Son of the Living God, nor in our Lord's atonement? But the very fact of the great Hindu leader's name and work being constantly compared with the person and ministry of Jesus will, we hope, cause multitudes to ask about the Christian's God and to purchase copies of the New Testament in an effort to become better acquainted with the great Guru (teacher) to Whom their own beloved Mahatma is being compared. The educated Hindu, when not handicapped by mass hysteria, has a coldly analytical mind which isn't easily satisfied unless the preaching be of the logical, thrustful type such as characterized the Apostle Paul's discourses. And so it behooves us missionaries of the Cross to thankfully recognize and take advantage of these fresh opportunities of imparting to enquiring Hindu knowledge concerning our Incomparable Lord and His finished work of Redemption.

Thank you for the December 1947 and January 1948 copies of the FORUM which came direct and which we have enjoyed reading. It is good to hear of the splendid success of the Million Dollar Campaign for Calvin College and Seminar. May God bless faculty and student body alike in your new semester's work.

Fraternally yours,

**Arthur V. Ramiah.**

**HUNGARIAN LETTER**

**Dear Dr. Boona:**

I AM heavily in arrears with my obligations to the esteemed readers of THE FORUM. The reason is the same—I am too busy. I laid down three of my public offices, but with formal commitments or without them, work hunts me up. My only joy is that thus far the Lord gave me health and strength enough to come around, sooner or later, to every one of my obligations. With this sense of gratitude toward the good Lord do I send this brief resume to THE FORUM.

In September last year we held our annual ministerial conference in Ligonier, Pa. It was the best attended conference we had for a long time. The speakers were recruited from our best churches. The addresses were purely doctrinal, partly practical. A healthy trend toward the doctrinal was observable even in the handling of the most practical problems.

Preceding the ministers' conference a conference was held also by the recently organized Elders' Association. It is a wonderful sight to see a large group of elders, young and old, together, feeling and searching after the things of God. When they run into some question of doctrinal implications, they send it over to the ministers' group, and when we come to some problem which in our opinion should be considered by the elders, we send it over to them. This is a very hopeful setup, indeed.

**Contemplated Church Merger**

As you know, negotiations are going on between the Free Magyar Reformed Church and the Magyar Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church to effect an organic union. As the E. & R. Church itself is negotiating for a union with the Congregational Christian Church, this latter body also is involved in our negotiations. In the course of these negotiations we made it absolutely plain that no unconditional merger would interest us. We are indeed warmly interested in finding ourselves in unity with our own Hungarian brethren, but not at the price of any concessions in matters doctrinal or form of government. The proposed Magyar Synod within the proposed United Church of Christ (we are not in love with this name) should be a sort of a church within the church, internally speaking. Thus far we gained almost all of our points, yet it would be unsafe to predict the final result either in the positive or the negative direction. As the hour of decision is drawing nearer, our people and ministers begin to recollect the memories of an heroic confessional past and they seem to hesitate in crossing the Rubicon. Yet we must face the problem in a soul-searching sincerity, because—a small group—lack of unity plagued us in many respects. Not so much in our own internal church life, as in our desire to be of more service to the cause of the Lord and to our Hungarian co-religionists in the land of our origin and all over the world. But even so, I wish to assure you that only a solution leaving us a good conscience toward you will have a chance of being seriously considered by our group. The past decade of association with you and with the rest of the Christian Reformed brethren is too inspiring to be forgotten.

**The Mother Country**

Our connections with Hungary narrowed down to strictly private and ecclesiastical channels. With the government we...
have no connections whatsoever, even to the extent of inviting its representatives in the United States to any of our affairs, whereas there is hardly any larger gathering without some of the more noted political exiles or refugees cordially invited and present. Even President Tildy is not regarded any more as a fellow minister, but as a politician only, left to the judgment of God and history.

All the news coming from the Church in Hungary points to a deep-ploughing, earnest revival, along biblical, confessional lines. The old, legal, nominal, hereditary and family-unit churchmembership is being replaced by a confessing individual membership. Church support is being shifted from the old coercive, legalistic basis toward the application of the principle of voluntary stewardship. The Church is getting ready for the inevitable separation of church and state. When this will happen, some sort of compensation for lost lands and bequests will have to be given by the state. The congregations will manage to maintain themselves, we hope, but unquestionably great losses will be sustained in the number of parochial schools and some higher institutions.

Some of these institutions are trying desperately to open new sources of support. Their main effort is to reach down closer to the simple rank and file of the Reformed population with their services, so that their appeals for material support may meet with favorable response. The cluster of institutions centered at Sarospatak is especially noteworthy for this effort. It is proving itself so useful and popular that, I believe, even the state will have to spare it and respect it. Dr. Joseph Zistros, president and one of the theological professors of Sarospatak and now an exchange professor at Hope College, Holland, Mich., would be more in authority to speak about Sarospatak. It is also for him, I guess, to announce officially, that you, Dr. Bouma, and Dr. Osterhaven and my own humble self were given honorary professorships by that venerable old institution of Reformed learning and education.

Distinguished Visitor

In the person of Dr. Andor Enyedy, bishop of the cis-tiharian district of the Reformed Church in Hungary, we'll soon have another visitor in our midst. It is a characteristic Magyar trait to combine contrasting elements into harmoniously working realities. I think the location of the country has something to do with it. The Magyars must contend with contrasting elements of East and West in culture, politics, religion, race, language, climate, vegetation, etc., at that particular spot on the globe they live in. Thus the Reformed Church in Hungary welded together the presbyterian and the episcopal forms of church government, curbing the presbyterian system by a constitutional episcopate that has no ecclesiastical privileges but administrative prerogatives only. This is a Hungarian specialty in church government and reference was made to it more than once during the negotiations between the Protestant Episcopal and the Presbyterian churches in this country. Dr. Enyedy is the most outstanding bishop of the Church in Hungary at the present. He is a couple years older than your correspondent, an acquaintance or I would dare say a friend of about 28 years standing. He comes with the authority of the General Conventus and therefore with the authority of the Church itself. He comes to strengthen the spiritual ties, to voice the appreciation of the Mother for help given and indirectly to show the need for more help if there is enough filial spirit to help.

We in America have a tacit understanding with the General Conventus, the highest executive branch of the Church, that we will not receive any emissaries from the old country except those approved by the Conventus. The Conventus, on the other hand, has pledged itself not to approve anyone without consulting us beforehand. This is very important. It saves us from endless invitations and free-lance collections. It safeguards our freedom to accept whom we want to accept. But more important than both of these considerations is that this way the Government is unable to send any ecclesiastical quislings into our midst! Our churches in America are unapproachable to the Communist-dominated government of present-day Hungary. If I may boast a little bit, we Hungarians were not born today; we can match diplomacy with diplomacy. An attempt, supported by 651 uniformed ministers and also by government agencies suffered shipwreck on this arrangement, although a disastrous flood that plagued mainly the Reformed population of the Upper-Tisza regions was used as a pretext to circumvent the safeguards of this arrangement.

Appreciation

From your letter I learned with deep gratitude that the good Christian Reformed people of Grand Rapids are extending a helping hand toward our brethren in Hungary. If I ever get into your city again I will take off my hat in the outskirts of it in honor of its people and walk bareheaded while there. I love, honor, and respect that city for my brethren there. May they prosper under the Lord's loving care! I suggest that they earmark their gifts for the Church in Hungary; then I am sure those will receive them for whom they are intended.

Sincerely,
CHARLES VINCE.

Perth Amboy, N. J.
April 14, 1948.

INTERNATIONAL CALVINISTIC CONFERENCE AT AMSTERDAM

An International Calvinistic Conference is being planned for the last week of July (27-29) and is to be held at Amsterdam. This undertaking was suggested by some leaders in England and Scotland, and is being undertaken by leaders in the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands.

Dr. G. Ch. Aalders, Professor at the Free University of Amsterdam, who has visited America in 1946 as a delegate to the First Reformed Ecumenical Synod and who at the time was also a speaker at the Third American Calvinistic Conference held at Calvin College and Seminary, is the President of the Executive Committee. Also Professor Berkouwer of the same institution, and likewise a delegate and a speaker at the American Synod and Conference, is a member of this Committee.

The general theme of the Conference is to be: “Calvinism and the Modern Mind.” The following speakers are scheduled. Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, minister of the Westminster Chapel, London, and the author of The Plight of Man and the Power of God, a leader in the British Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship, has been invited to speak on the theological-ethicalological outlook. Professor Sizoo of the Science Department of the Free University, a recognized authority on atomic energy and related subjects, is to deal with the technological outlook. Dr. Jean de Saussure, a Swiss scholar from Geneva, will deal with the philosophical outlook, with special reference to Existentialism. And from America Professor William Harry Jellema of the Philosophy Department of Calvin College has been invited to deal with the political outlook, more particularly with the subject of Calvinism and Democracy.

We sincerely hope this International Calvinistic Conference will be a success. This summer apparently all roads lead to Amsterdam. It is highly probable many Americans will be visiting also in the Netherlands. We invite and urge all who may be in the Lowlands during the last part of July to attend this Conference.

EDITOR
CALVIN'S WORKS: CENTENNIAL REPUBLICATION


The Book Editor of the Forum, impressed by the possibilities for good in the republication of Calvin's Commentaries and Institutes, chooses to recognize this event by giving it the whole of his department in this issue. To any man whose daily business in libraries has often led him to the unique event in the theological world. Joseph Scaliger, a brilliant scholar and an acute critic, who was a contemporary of Calvin, wrote:

"Oh, what a great man! There is none of the ancients to compare with him."

The Institutes of the Christian Religion constitute the most important work of Calvin, and it was especially as the writer of this remarkable work that he was called "the theologian". It is worthy of special notice that the first edition of this work was published in 1536, when the author was but twenty-seven years old, and that throughout the various editions the fundamental principles remained exactly the same. Calvin kept enlarging the work as time went on, until at last the so-called "definitive" edition appeared in 1559. It has been remarked that in this work Calvin did not show himself to be an original thinker, since its teachings are based on those of the Church Fathers. But it should be borne in mind that it was not Calvin's ambition to present new and unknown truth, but to state anew and with added emphasis the old truth, revealed in the Word of God and taught by the Church of the first centuries. He presented this truth in a new form, that is, be not overwhelmed by the volume and complexity of the physical job of giving out thousands of sets of forty-eight volumes, ranging from 350 to 600 pages each, is overwhelming. It is no wonder that such organs as Publishers' Weekly and the Pathfinder considered the undertaking newsworthy simply on account of its magnitude.

The volumes, coming in quick succession—we have had better than one volume a month since the series was launched in November of last year—are appearing in good form. The announcement had left some misgivings about this: one wondered whether the whole project would be possible at all only at the cost of bad print and shoddy format. It is not so. Reproduced by photo-lithographic process from the edition of the Calvin Translation Society of Scotland a century ago, the text is clear. The binding in blue cloth, its lettering and device stamped in gold, is appropriate and neat, and even the dust jackets suggest that the publishers have gone as far as they can to suit the form to the content. There is, consequently, nothing more to say of this except to counsel those in charge of the production to stand vigilantly by and insist on high standards of workmanship in every detail. Proud as we are to think that this solid contribution to American Protestantism should have its point of origin among us, we do not want to see contemporary Grand Rapids come off second best in competition with old Edinburgh. The Calvin Forum, at least, hopes that the publication, the coming to ripeness, of American Calvinism of Dutch tradition, its book houses and publishers, too, will achieve a competence and beauty in the volumes they produce which is comparable—why not aim high?—to those given out over the signature of Humphrey Milford at the Oxford University Press.

A commentary, presumably, is mainly useful to preachers in the exegesis of texts, and it may be that most of these sets of the Commentaries and Institutes are destined for the minister's study and the Seminary library. If so, they will reach the spiritual leaders of the church and so be of important influence. The influence will be important for Calvinists. And Calvinists can consider how few ministers of liberal or fundamentalist conviction would refuse to have a set, or having it fail to use it, or using it escape its influence. No wonder, consequently, that some ministers are ordering copies for fellow-ministers in their home towns, and that a number of laymen are distributing whole sets to preachers, teachers, Christian workers, and libraries in their home communities. Not Calvinists only, but that large percentage of American Protestantism particularly which in its origins was Calvinistic, is welcoming the publication. What better in a period of much theological disillusionment and some honest searching than to hear John Calvin speak again in elucidation of the Word?

Nothing seemed so pertinent by way of review of the several volumes as the trenchant introductions that accompany them. Consequently, these are by special arrangement reproduced here, some of them in curtailed form, the omissions being indicated by ellipses. Those who have read one or two of the introductions before will find the cumulative effect of reading them all in sequence impressive. Those who have not previously encountered them will, we hope, be led to procuring the volumes they introduce.

HENRY ZYLTSTRA.

THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS

PROFESSOR LOUIS BERKHOF

... The Institutes of the Christian Religion constitute the most important work of Calvin, and it was especially as the writer of this remarkable work that he was called "the theologian". It is worthy of special notice that the first edition of this work was published in 1536, when the author was but twenty-seven years old, and that throughout the various editions the fundamental principles remained exactly the same. Calvin kept enlarging the work as time went on, until at last the so-called "definitive" edition appeared in 1559. It has been remarked that in this work Calvin did not show himself to be an original thinker, since its teachings are based on those of the Church Fathers. But it should be borne in mind that it was not Calvin's ambition to present new and unknown truth, but to state anew and with added emphasis the old truth, revealed in the Word of God and taught by the Church of the first centuries. He presented this truth in a new form, that is, be not overwhelmed by the volume and complexity of the physical job of giving out thousands of sets of forty-eight volumes, ranging from 350 to 600 pages each, is overwhelming. It is no wonder that such organs as Publishers' Weekly and the Pathfinder considered the undertaking newsworthy simply on account of its magnitude.

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HENRY ZYLTSTRA.
Calvin could not have written the Institutes as a work which is based throughout on Holy Writ, if he had not at the same time been a diligent student of the Word of God. He surpassed all other Reformers in his true grasp of exegetical principles, and in his aversion to allegorical method and to all excessive typology. Diestel writes of him in his Geschichte des Alten Testamentes in der Christlichen Kirche: "Johannes Calvin ragt ebensowohl durch den Umgang seiner exegetischen Arbeiten wie durch eine seltene Genialität in der Auslegung hervor; unüber­troffen in seinem Jahrhundert, bieten seine Exegeten für alle folgenden Zeiten nog heute einen reichen Stoff der Schrift­kenntniss dar" (p. 267). One simply marvels at the fact that a man so frail could, within the space of about twenty-five years, prepare commentaries on nearly all the books of the Bible, even when one takes into consideration that some of them were published as they were taken down by students.

Calvin himself says in The Epistle Dedicatory, which serves to introduce his Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, that he and someone with whom he was conversing both came to the conclusion "that the chief excellency of an expositor consists in lucid brevity;" and that it was his ideal to practice that virtue. Not only did he omit most of the critical material that was available in his day, but also generally refrained from giving the opinions of others, and sought to give what he considered the best interpretation, in order that the readers might not feel lost in a labyrinth of conflicting interpretations and at last become confused. We may be grateful for the fact that the great Reformer did not do as some modern commentators, who devote more time and attention to the discussion of all the critical questions pertaining to the text of the Bible than to the contents and to the meaning of what the Bible says. Calvin does not seek to comment on every word, but seeks to grasp and to reproduce clearly and briefly the general thought of the sacred writers.

The Commentaries of Calvin are still held in high esteem, not only by those who are spiritual descendants of Calvin, but also by many who differ with him fundamentally. Modern commentators often deem it worthwhile to acquaint their readers with Calvin's interpretation, and in many instances give preference to his comments. Dean Farrar, who was very far from being a Calvinist, yet speaks of him as being the greatest exegete of the Reformation, and pays him the following tribute: "The neatness, precision, and lucidity of his style, his classic training and wide knowledge, his methodical accuracy of procedure, his manly independence, his avoidance of needless and commonplace homilies, his deep religious feeling, his careful attention to the content and context of every passage, and the fact that he has commented on almost the whole Bible, make him tower above the great majority of those who have written on Holy Scripture" (History of Interpretation, p. 343 f.).

THE BOOK OF ISAIAH
By Dr. Edward J. Young

In the following work of John Calvin (Isaiah), the reader is presented with a commentary of rare excellence. The material was first delivered in lectures, being taken down by scribes and afterwards submitted for Calvin's approval. It was then issued as a commentary and dedicated to King Edward the Sixth of England.

This first edition was thoroughly revised by Calvin himself so that, as he says, "it ought justly to be reckoned a new work." It is this revised edition from which the translation herein given was made.

When the reader takes Calvin's commentary in hand, he may be sure that he has a safe and trustworthy guide to the proper understanding of Isaiah's message. Such a guide is needed today perhaps more than ever before, since at the present time the prophecy of Isaiah is the object of much destructive critical study.

In the eighteenth century men first expressed serious doubts as to whether Isaiah had actually composed the entire book that bears his name. It came to be more or less generally held that chapters 40-66 were not the work of Isaiah the son of Amoz, but had been written by some unknown prophet who lived in Babylonia during the exile. For convenience sake, this "Great Unknown" was commonly designated the "second Isaiah." One reason why men adopted this strange view of the authorship of these latter chapters was found in a refusal to admit the existence of true predictive prophecy. In Isaiah 48:22 and 45:1, Cyrus (who lived at the time of the exile) is mentioned by name, yet Isaiah himself prophesied two centuries earlier than Cyrus' time. It is obvious that those who disbelief in predictive prophecy would reject the view that Isaiah could have written such passages.

The throne of the "second Isaiah," however, was none too secure. In 1892 appeared the commentary of Bernhard Duhm in which it was asserted that chapters 56-66 were later than the exile and were not written in Babylon. To their author Duhm gave the name of "third Isaiah." Thus, the "second Isaiah" was cut in two. This thesis of Duhm's received wide acceptance, and scholars devoted much time to the process of dissecting the noble prophecy of Isaiah in an endeavor to discover the author of each section. One writer (Karl Marti) even went so far as to refer to the book as a "little library of prophetic writings."

There is at the present time a mild reaction in the scholarly world to the extreme divisive measures of Duhm, and men are being more and more compelled to recognize that in the proph­ecy of Isaiah there is a deep underlying unity. Nevertheless, the school of Duhm has by no means died out. Consequently there is hardly a modern commentary that can be depended upon to lead the reader to the true message of Isaiah.

For this reason the publishers of the present work are warmly to be commended for making available at this time these splendid comments of John Calvin. They are thus rendering a real service to the entire Church of God. For the exposition of Calvin on Isaiah has all those characteristics which go to make up a truly worthwhile commentary.

In the first place, the work is philological. Calvin did not content himself with a translation but learned the Hebrew language so that he might know the Old Testament in the original. And Calvin had a competent knowledge of that language. Throughout the exposition he appears to have been guided by a sincere desire to be faithful to the text. With conscientious devotion he follows the method of grammatico-historical exegesis. And this is indispensable in one who would be a serious interpreter of the Holy Scriptures.

Calvin's commentaries are also written from the standpoint of one who believes that the Bible presents a system of truth. To Calvin the Bible was not a collection of discordant, inhar­monious, jumbled fragments, written by authors living many years apart and presenting conflicting viewpoints about God and man. To him it was the Word of the living and true God. Hence, in expounding Scripture Calvin has ever in mind the "consent of all the parts." He interprets Isaiah in the light of the remainder of God's written revelation and hence does not introduce into his exposition the vagaries and fancies which characterize so much of modern exegesis.

One who can look upon the prophecy of Isaiah as nothing more than a product of the religious genius of the ancient He­brews has thereby excluded any possibility of ever arriving at a correct interpretation. For the prophet claims that his message has come from God, and the earnest interpreter must take into account this psychological conviction upon the prophet's part. To ignore this conviction—as is done in so much modern literature upon the subject—and to place the prophecy on a par with other religious literature of antiquity; to regard it, in other words, as nothing more than the fruit of the reflection of a deeply religious mind, is to shut oneself out entirely from obtaining a proper understanding. Calvin did not do this. Like a little child, he welcomed the revelation which God gave to Isaiah, ready to hear the very words of God, and to the exposition of these words he devoted all those marvelous gifts
with which God had endowed him. Calvin's commentaries are deeply theological, and hence they are truly worthwhile.

Lastly, in expounding the Bible, Calvin sought to be practical. In the present work the author discusses some of the deepest truths of the Christian faith, but he never divorces these truths from their bearing upon the Christian life. Doctrine and ethics here walk hand in hand. Like Isaiah of old, Calvin is deeply overcome with awe at the holiness of God, and he would walk and have his readers walk in the light of the Lord.

Perhaps the greatest interpreter of Isaiah since the time of Calvin has been Joseph Addison Alexander, and Alexander speaks of Calvin as follows:

"Calvin still towers above all interpreters, in large commanding views of revelation in its whole connection, with extraordinary insight into the logical relations of a passage, even where its individual expressions were not fully understood. These qualities, together with his fixed belief of fundamental doctrines, his eminent soundness of judgment, and his freedom from all tendency to paradox, pedantic affectation, or fanciful conceit, place him more completely on a level with the very best interpreters of our day (i.e., 1846) than almost any intervening writer."

It goes without saying that these expositions should be in the library of every minister, Bible teacher or Sunday School teacher who sincerely desires to study this portion of the Word of God. But it would be a great mistake to regard these superb commentaries as intended only for students. For, despite their profundity, they are clearly and simply written and can well be understood by the average educated person.

It would be a matter for thanksgiving to God if ministers of the Gospel would urge their people to use these volumes of Calvin for devotional reading and meditation. This would promote a renewal of earnest study of the Word of God and we might look forward to raising all those theologians whose ministrations would attend such study. The Church today is perishing for lack of knowledge, and there is a famine of "hearing the word of the Lord."

May the Triune God be graciously pleased to use these commentaries of John Calvin on Isaiah to point the people of our day to the law and to the testimony, and to enable them to better understand those life-giving oracles which alone can light our path. The Church today is perishing for lack of knowledge, and there is a famine of "hearing the word of the Lord."

"This is a happy coincidence that this volume on Hebrews is being republished within a year of the four-hundredth anniversary of Calvin's birth was duly celebrated. The whole course of his life is, however, deserving of commemoration, and the period from 1564 during which his monumental commentaries were prepared may be recalled on this occasion with special gratification.

It is a happy coincidence that this volume on Hebrews is being republished within a year of the four-hundredth anniversary of its origin in 1549. For that fact serves to recall the rich spiritual significance of the Protestant Reformation. Some forty years ago the four-hundredth anniversary of Calvin's birth was duly celebrated. The whole course of his life is, however, deserving of commemoration, and the period from 1564 to 1568 during which his monumental commentaries were prepared may be recalled on this occasion with special gratification.

Fortunately, present interest in Calvin is not merely that of the antiquarian. Even many modern scholars who consider Calvin's theology unconvincing, and regard his view of Scripture as formalistic, acknowledge that he possesses a high degree of contemporaneity. Calvin is often characterized as one who, though not entirely free from the shackles of medievalism, at his best is a prophetic spirit who speaks forth to our times and is capable of arousing men to an experience of vital religion. However inadequate such evaluations of Calvin may be, they are encouraging in so far as they involve a serious reckoning with what Calvin had to say and offer hope that a more solid estimate of his Christian position may yet emerge.

The true genius of Calvin will never be grasped, in my judgment, unless he is recognized as being first of all a Biblical theologian. This implies, negatively, that Calvin was fundamentally neither speculative nor mystical, nor perhaps even practical, though he may not have been able to emancipate himself completely from such influences. He combined in distinguished fashion devout submission to the Word of God as basic to piety and morality, as well as to the highest scholarship, and freedom from human traditions which gave freshness and vigor to his entire life and activity. That this evaluation of Calvin is a fair one is clear from his incomparable Institutes. But it is also borne in upon one irresistibly as one seriously reads the commentaries. Even the comprehensiveness of his exegetical labors serves to bring to mind his profound concern to understand and to expound the Holy Scriptures. One needs, however, to employ Calvin in one's own study of the Bible, preferably along with other commentaries as standards of comparison, to discover how constantly and happily reverence for what stands written is wedded to a rare objectivity of exegetical method.

Among the evaluations from the past which agree basically with the above judgment none is perhaps more carefully done than that prepared a century ago by a distinguished German exegete, Professor F. A. G. Tholuck of Halle, an evaluation the more impressive because it came from one who was not himself a Calvinist (see "Calvin as an Interpreter of the Holy Scriptures," first published in Tholuck's Literarischer An­zeiger in 1831, and included in an English translation with the volume on Job in the Edinburgh translation of Calvin). Among the formal excellencies of Calvin's commentaries Tholuck singled out their elegance of diction, conciseness of expression, symmetry and freedom from immoderate digressions. On the material side he sums up their qualities in terms of doctrinal impartiality, exegetical tact ("which makes it even possible for him to adopt forced interpretations"), his considerable and in­obtrusive learning, and his deep Christian piety.

All these qualities are conspicuous in this Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews. At the time of its composition in 1549 Calvin had not yet reached his fortieth birthday anniversary, but his several previously published commentaries on the Epistles of Paul, not to speak now of his Institutes, give ample proof of his ripe maturity at that time. The work introduced here is a truly admirable example of his exegetical skill and is at once a heartwarming book of devotion.

Calvin, as distinguished from Luther, had no question as to the canonical authorship of this Epistle, and throughout the exposition this regard is constantly in view. And Calvin is seen at his best in discussing a passage like Hebrews 6:4-6, which proved a stumbling block to Luther, for there the breadth of his Biblical perspective and the absence of dogmatic rigidity came brilliantly to view. Calvin's freedom from bondage to tradition is seen, moreover, in that he does not rest the author­ship of the Epistle upon epistolary authorship. In fact, the author of the Epistle foretellingly of Pauline authorship, primarily on the basis of the testimony of the Epistle to its own origin. In his comments on Hebrews 2:3 he does justice to the distinction drawn between the apostolic circle who had heard the Lord and those to whom this witness had been attested, and thus avoids the forced interpretations developed by expositors who seem to feel under compulsion at all costs to maintain Pauline author­ship. And with sound scholarship he argues that Hebrews cannot be regarded as a translation from an original Hebrew document, an hypothesis advanced in the ancient church in the interest of maintaining authorship and yet accounting for the distinctive style and language of Hebrews.

Another comment that illustrates Calvin's exegetical integrity is found in connection with his treatment of Hebrews 11:21, where the author follows the Septuagint in declaring that
Jacob worshipped upon the top of his staff rather than the Hebrew text which speaks instead of his bed. This comment is indeed sometimes cited, along with a few other isolated passages, as evidence that Calvin, in spite of his explicit testimony to the contrary, betrays a rather free attitude towards the doctrine of inspiration. But such argumentation is not impressively if evaluated with due caution. Calvin in truth implies that there is a mistake in the Septuagint, and that the author of the Hebrews used that text without correction. But he makes the point that, since the author's argument is not affected by the use of the Greek text of the Old Testament in current use among his readers, it was not necessary to quote the original text precisely. It is highly significant for our evaluation of Calvin's conception of inspiration to observe that Calvin insists in this very connection that it is essential that "readers are ever brought back to the pure and original text of Scripture," although by way of accommodation to usage he allows that it was permissible to quote such a translation as the Septuagint. But it is to Calvin's credit also that he does not resort to strained or tortuous harmonics to solve the problem presented by the divergence of the passage quoted from the original.

Calvin found the message of Hebrews most timely for the age which he immediately addressed, principally because of its concentration upon the theme of the priesthood of Christ and the virtue and dignity of that only true sacrifice which he offered by his death. This theme, which, according to Calvin's thought, stood at the very center of Christianity, had come to be largely obscured. The present day is also one in which to a large degree the priestly and atoning work of our Lord is minimized and repudiated. The present work possesses a new timeliness, therefore, as it once again finds a company of readers today. It is timely, not first of all because it may serve to deepen contemporaneous knowledge of Calvin, but because through Calvin men may gain a profounder knowledge of Christ, the great high priest through whose sacrifice the glorious blessings of the new covenant have come to realization.

THE EPISTLES TO THE CORINTHIANS
By Dr. William D. Chamberlain

Slightly more than four hundred years ago, Calvin published his commentary on I Corinthians. His "First Epistle Dedication," dated Geneva, 24th January, 1546, was addressed to "That Illustrious Man, James of Burgundy." Ten years later Calvin found himself "under necessity of erasing" the name of James from the dedicatory pages. There is a difference of opinion as to whether James deserted the Protestant movement, or merely fell out with Calvin. That question cannot be discussed here. Certainly, he and Calvin no longer agreed; so the second dedication is made to "Lord Galliaus Caracciolus," an Italian nobleman, who left family, fortune, friends, and country to cast his lot with the Protestant cause.

The year 1546 was a troubled time for Calvin. Charles V of Spain was a continual threat to the young Protestant movement. Profligacy and drunkenness were common in Geneva and there was much personal opposition to Calvin. One wonders how he ever found time for the immense amount of writing that he did. It is quite impressive that with all the multitude of responsibilities which he carried, such as lecturing, preaching, and civic duties, his writings never betray the marks of haste. There is a clarity and finish to his style which elicits the admiration even of his opponents.

Calvin's age was somewhat like our own. It was a day of power politics, with Charles V and Francis I of France jockeying for control of Europe. The times were troubled, much in the same way as are our own. But it was also a time of great interest in Biblical interpretation. Men were seriously concerned to know what the Bible actually teaches. In this respect, too, Calvin's day resembled ours. Much stress was laid on the actual, practical significance of the Bible for living. It was a period of great advance in methods of Biblical interpretation. Mosheim lists forty-five interpreters of that time. Calvin, unquestionably, was the greatest of them all. Calvin's day resembled ours in its marked emphasis on Biblical theology. There is, in our time, a great urge for writing on various Biblical doctrines. This is a wholesome, promising movement.

This revival of interest in the practical values of the Bible for daily living makes it all the more significant that Calvin's commentaries are being republished for the use of Biblical students. It is true that Calvin was a "child of his age." It is also true that much of his written and spoken teaching was necessarily controversial in nature; but this does not invalidate it. He displayed a remarkable degree of honesty in his interpretation. He had a sincere desire to determine the true meaning of Scripture. Even when dealing with controversial passages, he studiously avoided wresting the meaning of language to prove his point. For apologizing for the spinning of mystical meanings out of plain language, he had no patience. When one recalls that for a thousand years the Church had allegorized Scripture without reserve, it is amazing that Calvin should have been so free from it. It was his unswerving integrity of purpose that kept him true to his ideal. Much new light has been thrown on the historical background of Scripture, as well as upon the original language, but this has not outmoded the work of Calvin.

In this day of the Ecumenical Movement, it is very important to remember Calvin's earnest desire to let the Scripture speak for itself. The Corinthian letters are rich in material for practical theology and also for dogmatic theology. Not only are the causes of schism within the Church clearly indicated in these epistles, but the cure is set forth. As men depart from the heart of the Gospel, following human leaders, or setting up shibboleths of their own, division and strife always result. When they return to Christ crucified, they find their bond of unity in Him. No greater doctrinal passages are found in any of Paul's writings than I Corinthians 15 or II Corinthians 5. Calvin's masterly insight into these, as well as others, is characteristic of the whole commentary. His comments on I Corinthians 13 show him to be thoroughly alive to the best scholarship of his day. His own remarks are quite ahead of some more recent writings.

The Ecumenical Church can find a real and vital unity only as it honestly turns to the Scripture for guidance in its faith and practice. Not only are these epistles important for practical theology, but they also demonstrate the power of the Gospel to win its way in a profligate, and licentious civilization. If the Gospel could triumph in Corinth, it can win under any circumstances. This is an important lesson for our day.

It is highly desirable that Calvin's commentaries be reprinted, for, unfortunately, some of his followers have done him the disservice of making his theology less human than he made it. He had an amazing grasp of Scripture and an ability to make its meaning clear. In some minor points his interpretation can be improved upon, but, in the main, it stands as a monument to his intellectual power and his spiritual genius. Calvin had a warmth of heart, as well as intellectual power. Many Calvinists have failed to catch this warmth. He himself said, "Too many in the present day convert the Gospel into a cold and shadowy philosophy." We need to recover his warmth, his penetrating spiritual insight, his intellectual grasp. Combining these, Calvinism can again become a mighty power in evangelizing the world.